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TO: ADMINISTRATOR AND SENIOR EXECUTIVES

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ADMINISTRATOR:

EPA Chief Meets With Canadian Counterpart To Discuss Climate Policy.

The [Winnipeg \(CAN\) Free Press](#) (4/8, Cheadle) reported that EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy appeared at a town hall-style meeting with her Canadian counterpart, Catherine McKenna, in Ottawa last Thursday. The women "played up mutual promises to reduce methane emissions and work co-operatively in the Arctic," while "sing[ing] each other's praises and tout[ing] continental environmental co-operation." McCarthy did not discuss Canada's oil sands crude production or the Keystone XL pipeline, and instead said, "It is not a goal of shutting anything down or keeping anything in the ground. It's all about whether you can reduce the carbon pollution that is fuelling climate change."

The [Hill](#) (4/7, Henry) reported that McCarthy's message was that tightening rules of methane emissions will "affirm our leadership on climate," and also keep the fossil fuel industry "sustainable" in the future. The [Washington Examiner](#) (4/7, Takala) reported that McCarthy was in Canada to "discuss the creation of a joint framework to cut methane in both countries." McCarthy's Canadian counterpart, Environment Minister Catherine McKenna, "[said] Canada may have to slow walk climate change regulations to prevent the country from becoming too divided." [E&E Publishing](#) (4/7, Heikkinen) also provided coverage.

EPA Chief Discusses Food Waste Reduction Initiatives.

[Christian Science Monitor](#) (4/8, Maza) reported that EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy used last week's Christian Science Monitor breakfast for reporters to "discuss how her agency is collaborating with faith communities on efforts to reduce food waste." Said McCarthy, "We thought it would be a nice opportunity for us to talk with faith leaders about how they can reduce greenhouse gases, in this case methane, by looking at how they work with their community and divert what would otherwise be wasted food to food pantries." The article noted that cooking and producing food contributes to nearly 30 percent of carbon emissions worldwide.

Researcher Derides The Economic Costs Of "Climate Symbolism".

Writing in the [Detroit News](#), (4/8) H. Sterling Burnett, a research fellow at the Heartland Institute, criticizes EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy's testimony before the House Energy and Commerce Committee on March 22, claiming that she "acknowledged...the Obama administration's climate efforts will do nothing to protect public of environmental health." Burnett then argues that the "costs of climate symbolism are high" by citing various economic costs related to the regulations, such as the closure of coal-fired power plants.

Additional Reading.

- **Gina McCarthy Promises EPA “Won’t Go Down Without A Fight” If GOP Wins In November.** [HotAir](#). (4/10, Shaw)
- **Lawmakers Ruin EPA Chief’s Earth Day With Plans For A Subpoena.** [Daily Caller](#). (4/7, Bastasch)

AIR:

Northeast, Mid-Atlantic States Call On EPA To Intervene On Cross-State Air Pollution. The [Connecticut Post](#) (4/9, Shay) reports, in continuing coverage, that Connecticut was among nine “downwind states” urging EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy to add nine “upwind states” to the Ozone Transport Region, requiring them to “install and operate the same air pollution controls that are required from similar sources in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic states.” According to Rob Klee of Connecticut’s Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, “it is now time for the upwind states to make similar investments...and stop spewing pollution that is carried over our borders and into the lungs of Connecticut’s residents.”

Environmental Coalition Calls For EPA To Enact Stricter Regulations On Diesel Pollution. The [Huffington Post](#) (4/8, Baldwin) reports that The Moving Forward Network, a nationwide alliance of environmental groups, is urging the EPA “to take actions to reduce toxic diesel exhaust pollution near ports, rail yards and highway.” The group argues that the pollution disproportionately hurts minority communities, calling the areas around freight facilities “diesel death zones.” In a meeting with the EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy, the group “asked EPA to encourage zero-emission technology for heavy duty trucks.”

EPA Designates DeSoto County In Attainment For Ozone Standard. The [Albuquerque \(NM\) Express](#) (4/11) reported that the EPA approved Mississippi’s request “to redesignate DeSoto County as being in attainment for the ozone standard.”

BROWNFIELDS/SUPERFUND/OTHER CLEANUPS:

City Failed To Clean Up Toxic Dust Leaking From Closed Sacramento Gun Range. The [Sacramento \(CA\) Bee](#) (4/11, Lillis) reports that the shuttered James G. Mangan Rifle and Pistol Range in south Sacramento was closed over 15 months ago “because it was polluted by hazardous levels of lead dust after decades of operation.” However, interviews and internal city documents claim the toxic dust from the ranger’s interior and roof was never cleaned up. Katharine Hammond, professor of environmental health sciences in the School of Public Health at the University of California, Berkeley, said the location of the gun range and recorded contamination levels created “potentially an environmental hazard,” and warned that lead dust “can travel quite a distance.”

Children Living Near Exide Plant In Vernon, California Have Higher Levels Of Lead In Blood. The [Los Angeles Times](#) (4/8, Barboza) reports an analysis released Friday by the California Department of Health found 3.58 percent of young children living near the now-closed Exide Technologies facility had elevated levels of lead in their blood in 2012, compared with 2.41 percent of children living further away. The analysis found 285 children with elevated blood levels living in communities near the shuttered Vernon battery recycling plant and noted “a moderate increase in risk associated with children living less than a mile away from the plant.”

EPA Investigating Possible Cleanup At Upstate New York Former Paper Mill. The [Watertown \(NY\) Daily Times](#) (4/11, Avallone) reports the US Environmental Protection Agency and Remedial Response Division is investigating a possible cleanup at the former St. Regis paper mill in Deferiet, New York. EPA on-scene coordinator Dilshad Perera said Brookfield Renewable Power LLC, owner of a hydroelectric plant located on the former mill’s property, alerted the agency to the problems. Perera said Deferiet Development LLC acquired the former mill in a tax auction in 2006 for purpose of recovering valuable metals. In the process of

dismantling steam pipes, their team left exposed damaged asbestos in buildings. Perera applied polymer sealant as a “temporary protective measure till a long-term solution is developed.”

Argonaut Mine Put On Shortlist Of EPA Superfund Sites. The Sacramento (CA) Bee (4/11, Ortiz) reports the US Environmental Protection Agency has named the 65-acre Argonaut Mine located in Jackson, California as one of eight places nationwide that may be tagged as federal Superfund sites. The mine accrued “extremely high levels of arsenic, lead and mercury” in the 19th and first half of the 20th century. According to Jared Blumenfeld, regional director of the EPA, the agency considers the site a special-case scenario due to its proximity near a high school, homes, and an aging dam that has been deemed structurally unstable. Blumenfeld added that the EPA has begun work on the highest contamination at the site.

Ohio Lawmaker Sponsors Legislation To Reclaim Abandoned Mines. The Martins Ferry (OH) Times Leader (4/10, Cera) reports Ohio Rep. Jack Cera (D) has proposed a bill to redirect 3 percent of collections from the state’s Kilowatt Hour Tax Receipts Fund to abandon mine reclamation and acid mine abatement. The legislation also earmarks another 0.75 percent of the tax to the Mine Safety Fund to help with safety training for current coal miners plus the operation of the Mine Training Center. The EPA says “acid mine drainage is metal-rich water formed from chemical reaction between rocks containing sulfur-bearing minerals.” According to the Times Leader, “there is evidence of this material throughout Eastern Ohio.”

Elevated Copper Levels Found In Ingham County, Michigan Buildings. The Lansing (MI) State Journal (4/8, Smith) reported elevated levels of copper were detected in seven Ingham County buildings in Mason, plus two schools. County Health Officer Linda Bail said the copper levels are not “excruciatingly high but at the same time they exceed EPA action limits, which means something needs to be done.” The EPA’s action level for copper is 1.3 milligrams per liter. Comparatively, the highest reading of two dozen county tests was 2.94 mg/l, more than double the EPA maximum. A joint news release issued Thursday by Mason City Administrator

Deborah Stuart and school Superintendent Ronald Drzewicki “said 16 of 29 tests showed copper levels exceeding the EPA limit.” City and county officials met Friday night to address the problem and possible solutions.

EPA Discovers Asbestos In Partially-Demolished Grant County, Washington School. The Columbia Basin (WA) Herald (4/8, Minnerly) reports the US Environmental Protection Agency notified the Grant County Health District that it found materials containing asbestos at a partially demolished, vacant elementary school. In a release, the Health District said the EPA plans to clean up the asbestos this spring. Living and working next to the school poses a “relatively low risk,” but the GCHD warns against having direct control with the materials that contain asbestos.

Navajo Leader Supports Call For EPA Subpoena Over Gold King Mine Spill. Law360 (4/11, Sheehan) reported Navajo President Russell Begaye “applauded Sen. John McCain’s call for the Senate Indian Affairs Committee to issue a subpoena for” US Environmental Agency Administrator Gina McCarthy to attend an upcoming field hearing on the 2015 Gold King mine spill, “which released millions of toxic wastewater into rivers that flowed into New Mexico and Arizona.”

KTVX-TV Salt Lake City (4/11) reports on its website that Begaye said the spill “culturally and economically devastated Navajo communities along the San Juan River, and the federal government’s failed response to this crisis is a public health, natural resources and economic disaster.” Begaye is also upset that the EPA refuses to “send even a single representative to the upcoming field hearing on the spill.” He says the spill happened eight months ago, “and despite promises to take full responsibility for the consequences of the three million gallon toxic spill,” the agency has “dragged its feet and has yet to fully reimburse the Navajo Nation’s costs.”

Additional Reading.

- **Navajo Artists Express Experience With Gold Mine Spill.** Durango (CO) Herald. (4/10, Romeo)
- **EPA Proposes Superfund For San Juan County.** Cortez (CO) Journal. (4/10)

CLIMATE CHANGE:

Think Tank Vows To “Vigorously Fight” Climate Change Subpoena. The Hill (4/8, Henry) reported the attorney general for the US Virgin Islands has issued a subpoena to the Competitive Enterprise Institute, “a conservative think tank based in Washington DC” that “questions global warming alarmism.” The group has been working in the Virgin Islands and on its website indicated it would “vigorously fight to quash this subpoena.” According to the group’s General Counsel Sam Kazman, “It is an affront to our First Amendment rights of free speech and association for Attorney General [Claude] Walker to bring such intimidating demands against a nonprofit group.”

Study: Making Climate Change Policy “Sexy” Will Not Change Public Opinion. In a Washington Post (4/8) analysis, political scientists Thomas Bernauer and Liam F. McGrath tested new framing techniques that position climate change policies as “sexy,” giving the policies a “personal and emotional appeal,” to see if the techniques were effective in swaying public opinion. Published in “Nature Climate Change,” the study ran two experiments “to see whether such reframing boosts public support for climate change.” The findings show “that the reframing does not seem to work” and that “all average framing effects are very close to zero, and are statistically insignificant.” Bernauer and McGrath indicated “simple spin-doctoring in climate change communications” will not “change how people view environmental policy” and argue “public figures should stick to emphasizing protecting the climate.”

Paris Climate Deal To Be Signed By More Than 130 Countries On Earth Day. The Hill (4/8, Henry) reported that on Earth Day, April 22, more than 130 countries will sign the Paris climate change agreement. According to the Hill, President Obama and Chinese President Xi Jinping have both indicated they would “sign the accord the first day it’s open for signatures, calling it an important signal to other nations that the world’s top polluters were committed to the deal.” President Obama said, “Our cooperation and our joint statements were critical in arriving at the Paris agreement, and our two countries have

agreed that we will not only sign the agreement on the first day possible, but we’re committing to formally join it as soon as possible this year.”

Op-Ed Blasts EPA Efforts To Reduce Methane Emissions From Oil, Gas Sector. Canada Free Press (4/11, Driessen) columnist Paul Driessen criticizes the Obama Administration’s efforts to reduce methane emissions from the oil and gas sector as less about slowing global warming and more intent on “hogtying and bankrupting US fossil fuel companies...and mandating a costly transition to renewable energy.”

Manchin Says Climate Change Debate Has “Deniers” On Both Sides. The Hill (4/8, Henry) reported that on Friday, West Virginia Sen. Joe Manchin said that “deniers” exist on both sides of the debate on climate change. He said that Republicans who deny humanity’s role in climate change are “deniers” but that Democrats also have “deniers” on their side. At a conference hosted by The Wall Street Journal, Manchin said, “Even worse than that, we have deniers that believe we’re going to run this country or run this world without fossil. ... That’s a worse denier, thinking they’re just going to just shift it and everything’s going to be hunky-dory.” Utilities and fossil fuel groups “have warned that transition will hurt the reliability of the electric grid, something Manchin said on Friday he is concerned about.”

ENERGY:

Additional Reading.

- **EPA Finds No Link Between Drilling, Sinkholes In Upper Ringwood.** North Jersey (NJ) Media Group (4/11)
- **EPA, Interior Push To Expand Review Of Big Bakken Oil Pipe.** Energy Daily (4/11)

GRANTS:

EPA Awards \$221,158 To Combat Indoor Pollutants In NM. The Las Cruces (NM) Sun-News (4/8) reported that the EPA “recently awarded \$221,158 to the New Mexico Environment Department to combat residents’ exposure to harmful pollutants.” The funds will focus on protecting school-age children from indoor air contaminants such as radon and asthma triggers.

INTERNATIONAL:

Additional Reading.

- ***Israel To Cut Carbon Emissions, Sees \$8 Billion Economic Boost.*** [Fortune](#). (4/10)
- ***Uber Offers Refunds After Mexico City Pricing Spat.*** [AP](#). (4/8)
- ***'Sludge' Can Help China Curb Emissions And Power Cities, Says Think Tank.*** [Reuters](#). (4/8, Mis)

PESTICIDES:

Additional Reading.

- ***Maryland Protects Its Pollinators With Limits On Bee-Addicting Pesticides.*** [Christian Science Monitor](#). (4/8)

RULES/REGULATIONS/POLICY

:

Op-Ed Blames EPA For Decline Of The Coal Industry.

In a highly critical op-ed in the [Georgetown \(KY\) News-Graphic](#) (4/11, Vanderbeck) Jeff Vanderbeck, the publisher of the Appalachian News-Express, blames the EPA for the decline of the coal industry. Vanderbeck's tirade against the agency cites new EPA water regulations that were passed "without notifying the city" of Pikeville, and resulted in a fine to the city. Vanderbeck acknowledges that "cleaner water is a good thing," but claims that "when the EPA imposes its will on water municipalities throughout the nation without notice, like they did to the coal industry, it's an extension of their overreaching policies and there is no one there to stop them."

WATER:

Analysis Of EPA Data Finds Many Water Systems Have Had Elevated Lead Levels.

The [AP](#) (4/9, Foley, Hoyer) reports that an analysis of EPA data found that around 1,400 water systems in the US have had elevated lead levels under federal standards in recent years. The AP reports that many of the water systems identified are connected to schools.

Flint Water Committee Says Tap Water Safe Again With Filter. [MLive \(MI\)](#) (4/10, Ridley)

reports the Flint Water Interagency Coordinating Committee announced on Friday that it is safe for residents to drink tap water again, if properly filtered. The committee also encouraged residents to regularly flush their plumbing systems in order to clear out remaining lead, but acknowledged that many residents may be hesitant to do so because of the city's high water rates. The [Detroit Free Press](#) (4/8, Dolan and Gray) also covered the story noting that an EPA official says the city's water has greatly recovered, but still remains unstable. The Detroit Free Press also reports that there are still parts of the city with high lead levels. The [Wall Street Journal](#) (4/8, Maher) adds that pregnant women and young children are still advised to only drink bottled water.

Also covering the story are: the [Detroit News](#) (4/8, Oosting) and [Reuters](#) (4/8, Klayman).

Virginia Tech Professor To Present Latest Findings On Flint Water On Tuesday. The [Detroit Free Press](#) (4/9, Dolan) reports Virginia Tech University Professor Marc Edwards, one of the experts on the Flint water crisis, is expected to release his latest findings on Tuesday.

Nonprofit Organization Questions Efficacy Of Drinking Water Tests For Safety Of Bathing Or Showering. The [Detroit News](#) (4/8, Lynch and Carah) reports the nonprofit Water Defense says that whether or not water is safe for bathing or showering should be determined separately from testing for whether water is safe to drink. The organization's chief technology officer Scott Smith says, "It is irresponsible and incomprehensible for anyone to declare bathing and showering is safe based on testing sinks and using drinking water standards to declare bath/shower water safe — let alone not even testing bath/shower water for the full spectrum of chemical." The EPA issued a statement on Friday saying there is no evidence that Flint's water is not safe for bathing or showering.

Investigation Finds Poor Communication Between Officials Regarding Legionnaires' Disease Outbreak. According to an investigation conducted by the [Detroit Free Press](#) (4/10, Anderson), there was poor communication between Flint and Genesee County regarding the Legionnaires' disease outbreak in the city. The investigation reviewed emails exchanged between city and county officials and found that some officials had sought to disclose the outbreak to the public, but the poor communication between officials made that difficult. The investigation also found that county officials contacted the CDC

about the problem, but the CDC was not invited to intervene by the state of Michigan until January 2016.

Flint Delaying Distribution Of Water Bill Credits In Order To “Get It Right.” The [Detroit News](#) (4/8, Oosting) reports Flint City Administrator Sylvester Jones announced on Friday that the city is delaying distribution of \$30 million in state funds as credits on people’s water bills because the city wants “to take the time to get it right before it goes out.”

Lawyers Representing Michigan Governor File Motion To Dismiss Lawsuit Over Flint Water Crisis. The [Detroit News](#) (4/8, Chambers) reports lawyers representing Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder have filed a motion to dismiss a class-action lawsuit brought against the governor over the Flint water crisis claiming that the lawsuit was filed too late. The motion to dismiss claims that the plaintiffs failed to file their lawsuit or a notice of intent within six months of when Flint changed its primary water source to the Flint River on April 25, 2014.

Hundreds Of Schools Found With Unsafe Lead Levels. The [AP](#) (4/10, Seewer) reports that 278 schools and day care centers nationwide “violated federal lead levels” during the past three years and approximately a third of those had lead levels “at least double the federal limit,” based on EPA data. The problems stem primarily from older buildings with piping and water fixtures made from lead parts, and the high cost of replacement results in many schools relying on bottled water as an alternative. Only one school in ten is required to conduct lead testing, according to the AP, and another 90,000 schools that receive water from “city-owned systems” are not required to undergo regular tests.

Lead Levels Exceed Standards In Thousands Of US Water Systems. [PBS’ NewsHour](#) (4/10, 6:15 p.m. EDT) reported, “Looking beyond the lead-tainted drinking water crisis in the city of Flint, Michigan, an Associated Press investigation of Environmental Protection Agency records has found: nearly 1,400 water systems providing tap water to nearly four million Americans exceeded the acceptable lead level at least once between 2013 and 2015.” AP reporter Meghan Hoyer said they looked at “at roughly 77,000 water systems across the US and what we found was you know, the ones that had lead

levels higher than the federal standard ranged, they were in almost every state, and they ranged from very small systems with 20 or 25 customers to very large systems. We saw cities and counties that served hundreds of thousands of people that had repeatedly breached over the limit.”

Additional Reading.

- **More Than 60 Northwest Water Systems Exceed Federal Lead Limits.** [Seattle \(WA\) Times](#) (4/11).
- **33 Mass. Water Systems Test Over Federal Lead Limit.** [Boston \(MA\) Globe](#) (4/9, Leblanc).
- **High Lead Levels A Costly Concern At Schools In Maryland.** [Washington \(DC\) Times](#) (4/9, Dishneau).
- **Few Examples In Nevada Of Lead Drinking Water Contamination.** [Washington \(DC\) Times](#) (4/9, Ritter).
- **EPA: 6 Arkansas Water Systems Exceed Lead Limit Since 2013.** [Washington \(DC\) Times](#) (4/9, Houston).
- **EPA: 18 Water Systems In Kansas Show High Lead Samples.** [Washington \(DC\) Times](#) (4/9, Hegeman).
- **Analysis: 28 Water Systems In Alaska Exceed EPA Lead Limit.** [Washington \(DC\) Times](#) (4/9, D'oro).
- **More Than 100 Pennsylvania Water Systems Topped Lead Limit.** [AP](#) (4/11).

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